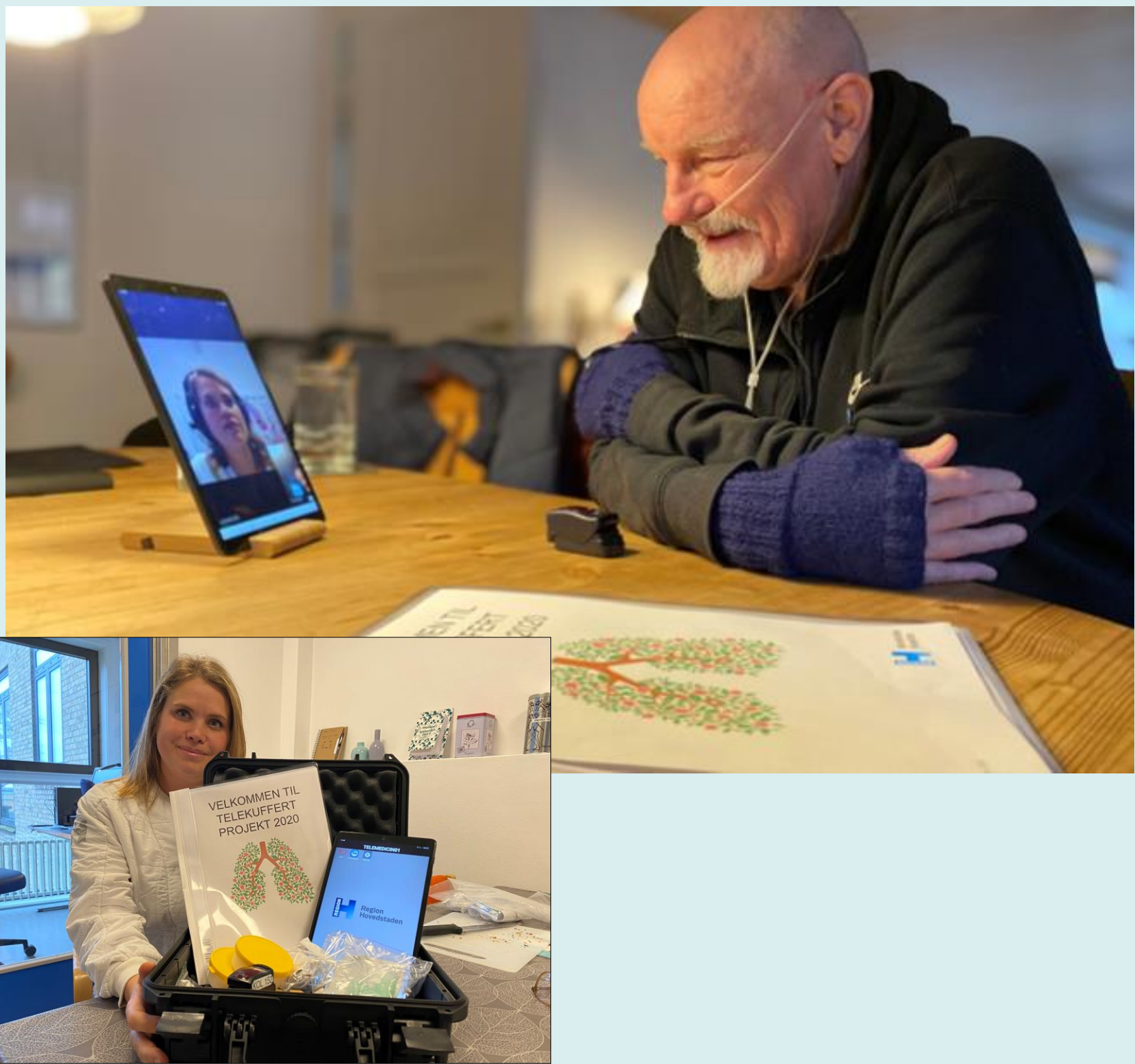


Telemedicine for chronic obstructive pulmonary disorders – a patient perspective

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Conclusion

The COPD briefcase project adds to patients’ sense of safety and contributes to some extent to their QOL. This was particularly because the COPD briefcase gave them the opportunity to get through to the outpatient clinic quickly when they need help.

Another important reason for the safety feeling was the relationship between the patients and the nurses in the pulmonary outpatient clinic. They have known each other well for years. The patients in the study appreciated most the synchronous contact via the telephone.

Even without entering data, they had an opportunity to contact the outpatient nurses, whom they knew

Introduction

In Denmark (population 6 million) approximately 400,000 patients suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disorders (COPD), and the prevalence is increasing. Telemedicine, which enables video or phone appointments between patients and their health care practitioners, is beneficial for both health and convenience. Of greatest importance, telemedicine offers an increased patient safety and prevents repeated hospitalizations, which leads to both financial and resource-related savings.

Aim

To obtain knowledge about how patients with COPD experienced and learned from being in an asynchronous as well as synchronous telemedical contact with the lung clinic once or twice a week, with particular focus on the influence this had on their health and quality of life (QOL).

Methods

In total 12 qualitative interviews were collected in the patients’ homes with patients included in the COPD briefcase project. Each interview lasted between 25 and 45 minutes. The interview guide was qualified in advance with a Patient Population Involvement interview. During the visits, it was also possible to observe the patients in their own homes.

Results

The coding categories, *Severity of illness*, *The COPD briefcase*, *Psychological conditions*, and *Quality of life with COPD* were clustered into patterns and synthesized to illuminate the phenomenon and constitute the themes.

<i>Subtheme</i>	<i>Main theme</i>
Safety	Importance of the COPD briefcase
Waiting Time	
Seniority	
Modesty	
What is missing	
Known	Transformation of the patient role
Taken care of	
Forget	
Dependent	
Pushed	

The analysis revealed two main themes, *Importance of the COPD briefcase*, and *Transformation of the patient role*, and ten subthemes

The study gives a view of how complex life lived with COPD is, and how great a burden rests on the relatives. Research is needed to clarify their role, importance, and experience as a relative.

